WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method of multicasting program content, said method comprising:

2   providing encrypted program content for distribution to a client as part

3   of a multicast distribution;

4   providing a key for use by said client in decrypting a first portion of

5   said encrypted program content; and

6   distributing a first portion of said encrypted program content to said

7   client as part of said multicast distribution, wherein said first portion of said encrypted

8   program content is encrypted so as to be decrypted by said client using said key so as to

9   obtain a free preview of said program content.

1   2.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said providing a key

2   comprises providing a content key for use by said client in decrypting said first portion of

3   said encrypted program content.

1   3.   The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising

2   providing a free preview key; and

3   providing said free preview key to said client prior to said distributing

4   said first portion of said encrypted program content.

1   4.   The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising

2   providing a content key;

3   encrypting said content key with said free preview key; and

4   providing said encrypted content key to said client.

1   5.   The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:

2   offering to said client said free preview of said program content.

1   6.   The method as described in claim 5 and further comprising:

2   providing a user interface for use by said client in purchasing said

3   program content.

1   7.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said free preview

2   comprises a movie trailer.

1   8.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said free preview

2   comprises an advertisement for said program content.

1   9.   The method as described in claim 1 wherein said program content

2   comprises a movie and wherein said free preview is comprised of the beginning of said

3   movie.

1   10.   A method of multicasting program content, said method comprising:

2   providing program content for distribution to a client as part of a

3   multicast distribution;

4   distributing a first portion of said program content to said client in an

5   unencrypted format so as to provide a free preview of said program content;

6   encrypting a remaining portion of said program content;

7   distributing said encrypted remaining portion of said program content

8   to said client.

1   11.   The method as described in claim 10 and further comprising:

2   providing a key; and

3   utilizing said key to accomplish said encrypting said remaining portion

4   of said program content.

1   12.   The method as described in claim 11 and further comprising:

2   allowing said client to purchase said program content;

3   providing said client with a key operable to decrypt said encrypted

4   program content after said client purchases said program content.

1　　　　　　　13.　　A method of providing program content to a plurality of clients in a
2　multicast system, said method comprising:

3　　　　　　　　　　providing a server for communication with a plurality of client
4　computers;

5　　　　　　　　　　configuring said server so as to be operable to provide said program
6　content to said plurality of client computers;

7　　　　　　　　　　providing a free preview of said program content to said plurality of
8　client computers; and

9　　　　　　　　　　during said free preview, providing each purchasing client computer
10　with a key operable to decrypt at least a portion of an encrypted portion of said program
11　content.

1　　　　　　　14.　　The method of claim 13 and further comprising:

2　　　　　　　　　　providing said free preview for a period of time sufficient to allow a
3　predetermined number of said purchasing client computers to receive said keys operable for
4　decrypting said encrypted portion of said program content.

1　　　　　　　15.　　A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions
2　for performing a method comprising:

3　　　　　　　　　　providing encrypted program content for distribution to a client as part
4　of a multicast distribution;

5　　　　　　　　　　providing a key for use by said client in decrypting a first portion of
6　said encrypted program content; and

7　　　　　　　　　　distributing a first portion of said encrypted program content to said
8　client as part of said multicast distribution, wherein said first portion of said encrypted
9　program content is encrypted so as to be decrypted by said client using said key so as to
10　obtain a free preview of said program content.

1   16.   The computer readable medium as described in claim 15 wherein said

2   providing a key comprises providing a content key for use by said client in decrypting said

3   first portion of said encrypted program content.

1   17.   The computer readable medium as described in claim 15 and further

2   comprising:

3   providing a free preview key; and

4   providing said free preview key to said client prior to said distributing

5   said first portion of said encrypted program content.

1   18.   The computer readable medium as described in claim 15 and further

2   comprising:

3   providing a content key;

4   encrypting said content key with said free preview key; and

5   providing said encrypted content key to said client.

1   19.   A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions

2   for performing a method comprising:

3   providing program content for distribution to a client as part of a

4   multicast distribution;

5   distributing a first portion of said program content to said client in an

6   unencrypted format so as to provide a free preview of said program content;

7   encrypting a remaining portion of said program content;

8   distributing said encrypted remaining portion of said program content

9   to said·client.

1   20.   A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions

2   for performing a method comprising:

3   providing a server for communication with a plurality of client

4   computers;

5   configuring said server so as to be operable to provide said program

6   content to said plurality of client computers;

7   providing a free preview of said program content to said plurality of

8   client computers; and

9   during said free preview, providing each purchasing client computer

10   with a key operable to decrypt at least a portion of an encrypted portion of said program

11   content.

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